

First Principles in Religion, Morals, Government, and the Economy of Life

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Our object, by the publication of this journal, is to promote the Christian reformation, the abolition of slavery, the cause of the oppressed, and kindred causes—the application of the laws of God to the political, judicial, business arrangement, and the conduct of the individual. We have, we trust, the sanction of the Nation—the work of converting the world to God, restoring the common brotherhood of man, and founding a Society the type of heaven. Our text book is the Bible—the standard, the final law, our expediency, obedience, our plan, the Gospel—the test, the only one; less: our penalty, the whole armor of God.

Our Editors friendly, please give us notice.

Containing the testimony of the Peritoires and the Scriptural testimony. It is a

"To throw out the testimony, it may speak according to the word, it is better than to say it is not in." (Isa. 55: 10) "Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. 3: 16-17)

Part III.—Slaveholding brought directly to the test of the Bible.

CHAPTER XXII.

The seventh chapter, (of Jeremiah) opens with the following:

"The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, saying—
 "Stand in the gate of the Lord's house, and proclaim there
 this word, and say, Hear the word of the Lord, all ye of
 Judah, that enter in at these gates, to worship the Lord.
 Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Amen your ways and your
 doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Trust ye
 not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, the
 temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are these. For
 if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings, if ye
 thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor,
 if ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow,
 and shed not innocent blood in the land; then will I cause you
 to dwell therein, for they have said, We will build us a temple,
 we will burn incense therein, we will offer sacrifices therein;
 we will burn frankincense therein, because we will build us a
 temple, and we will burn incense therein." And the Lord
 said, I gave to your fathers, and ye did it.

Behold ye that are in lying wait, that seek my profit. Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods, whom ye know not, and ye shall stand before me in iniquity, which I will punish, saith the Lord God of Israel. We are called by the name of the Lord God of Israel. This is the name which is called by my name, because ye have said, 'We are called by his name.' But I, even I, have seen, I said to the Lord, 'But ye are not at all like to Shiloh, where I have made my name to dwell at the first, and ye shall not do so, for ye shall destroy my people, Israel, and now ye shall be as the nations, and shall be destroyed like to them.' I said, 'I will not call you by my name, neither will I say, 'I am the Lord God of Israel, and speaking ye shall not say, 'I am called by his name.' I answered not, therefore will I call you by the name, which is called by my name, where ye first called, at the time the place which I gave you and your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh. And I will not go out of my way, neither will I have called on all your brethren. For ye have said, 'We will have called on our fathers, for ye have said, 'Whether lift up your prayer for the people, that make sacrifices to other gods, or pray for the people, that make sacrifices to me, for I will not hear them.' — (Chap. vii. 1-16)

The prophet was commanded — occupy the gate of the Lord's house, and preach to all the worshippers there against their sins, especially their *prayer* sins. The impropriety of thus "preaching politics" to worshipping assemblies had not probably been discovered thus far; or, at least, the spirit of inspiration was not restrained by the interdiction. The worshippers were exhorted to repent, and

were continuing against trusting in their false religion professors, realizing that there was the true temple of the Lord, while they neglected to "thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbor." Such professors, under which they seemed to shield themselves against reproaches of their wickedness, were made *"appearing"*—lying words that would not profit. To them, and so far as they were concerned, it was no "*temple of the Lord*"—for they could not render him acceptable worship, while they tolerated or permitted oppression. And if this were to be the case with all of them, or with the controlling influences or majority of them, he would destroy the temple itself, remove his presence from it, and permit it to be destroyed, as it was, not long after, by the Chaldeans. They had treated his temple as if it were designed to be a den of robbers, and as though they thought it just fit for such an use, by making it the resort and fortress of oppressors, whom God had always regarded and treated as robbers. He would not continue them, in such a horrible, and bad example to the world, while he had sanctioned and laid first its up, and which he had wanted and laid waste, for similar cause. His temple at Jerusalem should share the same fate, and he would cast them out, as he had cast out Ephraim, or the ten tribes. And then, as they would not "*intercede*" for the victims of oppression, he would not permit his prophets, whom they had spurned, to intercede longer for them. By his retributive Provisions he would place them beyond the point in which prayers for their preservation would be in place, or appropriate.

It deserves special notice that, the oppression of "THE STRANGER" is particularly included in the passage under review. In this country, it is most notorious that the oppressions of slavery and slaveholding, are inflicted chiefly upon persons of African descent, (though born among several generations) under pretense that, being "strangers or aliens," they are not citizens, entitled to the protection of the Constitution and laws of this country. The constitution furnishes one of the main pleas upon which the people, their rulers, and their religious teachers defend themselves, when charged with a violation of God's commandment, in neglecting to "proclaim liberty throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof." They cannot do it, they say, because the slaves are not citizens, but are aliens, are "strangers!" The word is the descendant of Africans, in America, born here, are not strangers nor aliens, any more than are the descendants of twenty other nations who are protected by our laws. And a large portion of the slaves are partly descended from the same stock with their masters, some of them being born or sold by their own fathers and other near kindred. But if they are not citizens, they are not entitled to the same rights, specifically, within the free charter, with a special clause for protection. The lawless division of rights rest upon those who oppress the "strangers," and we ought to "execute judgment in their behalf."

In the next chapter, the signs, the impending calamities of this infatuated people, with the causes of them are still farther portrayed, in the midst of which it is said

Therefore will I give their wives unto others, and their fields unto them: that shall inherit them for every one of them from the least, even unto the greatest, is given *of abundance* from the prophet even unto the priest, every one dealth fairly. For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, 'peace, peace, when there is no peace' — v. 10-11.

Had the J's been in the common habit of violently seizing wives, and separating them from their husbands, as is done in America—an atrocity not recorded against them—the appropriateness of the terrible law would have been still more strikingly apparent. It is "necessary, the law of gain, profit or advantage, in some form, that is at the

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The spirit of inspiration that guided the pen of the prophet, must have had in mind those same ecclesiastical and political subtleties and manoeuvres, in our own day, so evidently calculated, if not designed to plaster over and hide the wound, instead of probing and curing it,—of staving off the examination of it,—of concealing intentions by ambiguities,—of prescribing to incidental symptoms instead of the disease itself—of contending against the effects of the sin, while shielding or excusing the sin itself, artifices with which the middle of our nineteenth century has been darkened and corrupted.

Then, as now, the people and their rulers were not left without Providential premonitions of coming ruin. Their anticipations of peace were not realized.

"We looked for peace, but no good came, for a time of health, and behold trouble!"—v. 15.

WAY-MARKS IN THE MORAL WAR WITH SLAVERY.

By Rev. HENRY T. CHEEVER.

Where Away? Free Soil on the Weather How!

BEFORE Navigation came to be governed almost entirely by the Chronometer and the Nautical Almanac, and when they but regularly bove the log and reeled the line, it used to be one main art of the mariner to watch and determine the drift, and to ascertain the set of the current. Upon the determination of that, the position of the ship, at any given time was largely predicated.

So now, in the moral warfare with slavery, out of which has actually grown a civil war in the nation, our judgment of what will be the issue and upshot of this war is largely determined by what we can learn of the drift of opinion—not so much the drift of present public opinion, as of the leading minds which, based on absolute truth and viewing all questions and events from the fixed stand-point of divine principles, are the shifting sand-bank of expediency, do sooner or later make and control public opinion.

Coleridge remarks, in the *Satanstoe Manuscript*, "That if you turn over the fugitive writings, that are well stored of the eagle's feather, & peruse the pamphlets, and those sheets that came out in light during the reign of Charles the First, and the Republic you will find in them one continued comment upon the aphorism of Lord Bacon, that the knowledge of the excellencies of men in general, between the ages twenty and thirty is the one great source of political prophecy. And John Jay Sydney regarded the whole of the *Age of Reason* in the Netherlands as a proof of the divine agency and the fountain of all the exalted and celestial of that revolution."

Now, it may not be easy to determine with absolute certainty the drift of public opinion and speculation at the present time, as regard how slavery is to be terminated by the civil war now raging. But that it will receive its death-blow by this war is evidently the prevalent conviction, and the people of God who believe that to be in the

